

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE TOURISM, OUTDOOR RECREATION AND
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Dear Representatives,

As you consider the merits of HB 4610, we ask you to please consider several reasons why this bill is important, not only to horseback riders and other trail users, but to the State of Michigan.

The horse industry is an \$8 billion industry in Michigan, this large an industry should be supported and encouraged to grow. One of the favorite things horse owners in Michigan like to do is take their families, dogs, and horses camping, to meet up with old and new friends. A good time is had by all, they return home relaxed, refreshed and ready to go back to work either at home or at their place of employment.

Also remember that the communities that surround those camping areas depend on the trail rider camper to support their restaurants, groceries, fuel stations, and quickie marts. The campers help to keep these small businesses open and funneling money back into the towns and the State.

Most of the horse owners are land owners, pay property taxes, buy locally made heavy duty trucks, purchase horse trailers, support the local feed stores, veterinarians, farm supply stores, farm equipment dealers. Then they buy saddles, bridles, blankets, stable sheets, etc. Most of these items are all American Made. This keeps lots of small businesses open and viable across Michigan.

When we go to the north woods camping, we fuel up on the way or when we get to that last station along the major roadway before the woods, that's where we buy the last bunch of ice and supplies we need in camp. We pay our camping fees, go ride the trails (the ones that are left), enjoy the time we are in camp then head for home. Most will stop at a local restaurant for breakfast, and will fuel again on the way, then top off the tank before getting home. We pump a lot of cash into Michigan's economy, when we go camping and trail riding.

Our DNR Director states she wants to bring in new outdoor users and keep the current ones, if this is so then she needs to be reminded to be sure that the State Forest Lands are useable, not restricted with downsizing and closures. We need HB4610 to ensure that our camps and trails remain open and unrestricted.

With the "Right To Ride" in Michigan, we will be financially blessed with a lot more out of state riders coming here with their money to trail ride and camp. There is no other State in the Eastern part of the United States that can offer what Michigan can. No other State has The Great Lakes surrounding them, the diversity of trails, and the number of acres of Public Land that Michigan has. All that is needed is guaranteed access to the Forest, which this bill will ensure.

Please support HB 4610.

Sincerely,
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